

Standard USG-5: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the concept of personal and civic rights and responsibilities and the role of the citizen in American democracy.

USG-5.3 Explain ways in which Americans can monitor and participate in politics and government, including engaging in political leadership or public service, analyzing and becoming informed about public issues and policy making, joining political parties and interest groups, voting, and volunteering in the community.
(P)

Taxonomy Level: 2.7-B Understand Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

There will have been no previous knowledge of this indicator through the Social Studies Academic Standards.

It is essential for students to be capable of becoming well-informed, participatory citizens. They should be able to identify important methods used by citizens to become informed about issues and to facilitate participation in the political process. There is a need to build upon indicator USG 5.2 and stress the critical role of citizens in the proper functioning of a democracy. Students need to recognize that voting is the most fundamental method of engagement but that citizen involvement should extend beyond voting into other areas of the political realm. An emphasis should be placed on how citizens become informed and students should learn to evaluate sources of information for validity, accuracy, truthfulness, and usefulness. This would be an appropriate indicator to utilize service learning projects and/or engage students in political/community clubs. At the very least there should be awareness of the potential for serving in the community to effect change and of organizations that are currently doing so. The focus in this indicator should be on the processes of citizens becoming informed and involved as well as the opportunity(s) for students to engage in the political sphere.

It is not essential for students to know about any particular issue or organization per se.

Assessment guidelines: It is the objective of this indicator to explain ways in which citizens can participate in governing and the democratic process. Appropriate assessment could require students to justify why citizen participation is necessary in sustaining a democracy and to describe the methods of participation listed in the indicator. Since informed citizens are considered critical to a democratic society, it would be appropriate to have students analyze means of citizens obtaining political information.